FAO Fisheries Report No. 678 FIPL/FIPP/R678(En)

ISSN 0429-9337

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Report of the

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME (GCP/INT/735/UK) AND FAO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES RESEARCH JOINT WORKING PARTY ON POVERTY IN SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation

Rome, 10–12 April 2002

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Rome, 2002

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ISBN 92-5-104794-4

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the report of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (GCP/INT/735/UK) and FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research Joint Working Party on Poverty in Small-Scale Fisheries – Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation held in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 12 April 2002.

Distribution:
All meeting participants
All FAO Members and Associated Members
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Directors of Fisheries
FAO Fisheries Department
FAO Fishery Officers in FAO Regional and Subregional Offices
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FAO Fisheries Report. No. 678. Rome, FAO. 2002. 22p.

ABSTRACT

This report presents a summary of the presentations and discussions of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) (GCP/INT/735/UK) and FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) Joint Working Party on Poverty in Small-Scale Fisheries – Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation. The objectives of the meeting were to (i) share experience and knowledge on this subject; (ii) identify clearly how the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries could serve as a tool in poverty alleviation in fishing communities; (iii) identify critical knowledge gaps and research needs; and (iv) elaborate a project framework and research methodologies. The meeting benefited from earlier discussions of this subject matter at the Third Session of ACFR, December 2000, and the Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE), SFLP/FAO Cotonou Workshop, November 2001, and the background papers prepared for them.

The meeting agreed on the urgent need to obtain a better understanding of the manifestations and extent of poverty in fishing communities and on the causal factors of the dynamics of poverty. It recommended the development of appropriate guidance material on poverty assessment and poverty alleviation measures in small-scale fisheries including the application of the SLA and the potential contribution of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The meeting noted that more research was required of the factors that influence the contribution of fisheries and aquatic resources to sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction especially in rural areas. In view of the close relationship between poverty and food security, a better understand was also needed of the actual contribution of fish to human nutrition, and reasons for changes over time. Improved knowledge and understanding of these aspects would contribute to a better recognition of fisheries in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). There was also a need of a greater participatory role of fisheries stakeholders in the development of PRSPs. A focus on PRSPs, however, should not divert attention away from the importance of other types of poverty reduction strategies.

The research framework and methodologies should be tailored to the intended use of the information (e.g. to inform about appropriate situation-specific poverty reduction measures; to generate comparable information on the extent of poverty; etc.). The meeting noted that for an increasing number of countries Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS) provide excellent data by household, and that the use of LSMS data in combination with census data might allow the application of poverty mapping techniques to measure poverty for small population groups such as fishing communities. Poverty mapping techniques and well-designed case studies provide powerful analytical tools for poverty assessment, to explain the causality of poverty and to help in prioritizing poverty reduction measures.

The meeting also considered the need for effective tools to disseminate research findings of project/case study results.

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INTRODUCTION[1]

1. The Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (GCP/INT/735/UK) and FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) Joint Working Party on Poverty in Small-Scale Fisheries – Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation, was held in FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, from 10–12 April 2002. The Agenda for the meeting is provided in Appendix A. The List of Participants is given in Appendix B. A list of papers and submissions tabled at the meeting is provided in Appendix C.

2. At its Third Session, Rome, Italy, 6–7 December 2001, the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) Steering Committee approved a normative three-year project on "Promoting the contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in poverty alleviation". The principal purpose is to strengthen FAO's normative and field work programme in support of member countries' efforts to alleviate poverty in fishing communities, and to enhance the contribution of the fisheries sector in national poverty reduction strategies and programmes. In addition, the project seeks to increase global awareness on poverty in small-scale and artisanal fisheries and on poverty alleviation strategies and measures. In the desire to ensure that this project is carried out in the most efficient manner possible, taking into account the recommendations of ACFR as well as the experience and knowledge of as wide a cross-section of persons knowledgeable on the subject, FAO and SFLP convened this working party whose expected outcomes were to:

- enrich our understanding of the subject through exchange of experience and knowledge;
- identify clearly how the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) could serve as a tool in poverty alleviation in fishing communities;
- identify critical knowledge gaps and research needs;
- elaborate a project framework and research methodologies.

OPENING

3. The meeting was opened by Neil MacPherson who chaired its first day and welcomed all the participants. Participants introduced themselves and their interest in the meeting.

4. Benedict Satia welcomed the participants on behalf of Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, FAO Fisheries Department. In his address, Dr Satia stressed the paramount objectives of FAO to contribute to enhanced food security and poverty alleviation. Small-scale fisheries played an important role in achieving these objectives and provided livelihoods to millions of mostly poor people. Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries in poverty alleviation has become a priority issue in the work of the Fisheries Department as evidenced by the fact that (i) the FAO biannual flagship publication on the State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) 2002, will contain an issue paper on small-scale fisheries and poverty alleviation; (ii) an agenda item of the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), February 2003,

[1] This report is structured such that it first presents summaries of the various presentations made during the meeting and some pertinent commentaries. It then provides in the final section a summary of the meeting's main outcomes and findings.

will address "Strategies for Increasing the Sustainable Contribution of Small-scale Fisheries to Food Security and Poverty Alleviation", and (iii) in the FAO Medium-term Plan 2004–2009, currently under preparation, at least two entities would address sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and poverty alleviation. He then referred to the discussions and outcome of the Third Session of ACFR on poverty-related issues (more details are given below in paragraph 45).

5. Richard Coutts, SFLP Programme Coordinator, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (GCP/INT/735/UK). He referred to the varied activities of SFLP including poverty profiling work and application of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) participatory assessment methods to inform, in particular, the pilot projects on the most appropriate policies and measures to contribute to sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation in fishing communities. He also referred to the very valuable Benin workshop on poverty alleviation and the Code of Conduct of Responsible Fisheries (November 2001) in gaining a better understanding of the causes and dynamics of poverty in West African countries. The workshop increased awareness on the need of a better integration of fishing communities' concerns into national poverty reduction strategies (details of the outcome of the Benin workshop are given in paragraphs 12 to 14).

POVERTY AND SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES – AN OVERVIEW OF ISSUES

6. Rolf Willmann provided an overview of poverty-related issues in small-scale fisheries. Due to the lack of pertinent research and data, any assessment of the extent of poverty in small-scale fisheries has to remain very tentative and speculative at the current time. In terms of employment, there are an estimated 39 million fishers and fish farmers in the world, and about 117 million people involved in fisheries related activities (e.g. fish processing, marketing and distribution) giving a total of 156 million people in fishing and fishery-related employment. As many as 90 percent of these 156 million might be employed in "small-scale" activities and/or living in coastal fishing communities. Given that often more than one person in a household is engaged in fishing and fishery-related activities, a figure of some 250 million people dependent in some way on small-scale fisheries does appear as a conservative estimate. As certainly not all of them are poor, this would clearly be an upper boundary of the possible extent of poverty in small-scale fisheries. On the other hand, the figure is indicative of the possibility of fishing communities contributing a significant share of global poverty estimated at some 1.2 billion people should it prove correct that there is widespread poverty in small-scale fishing communities as is frequently stated.

7. The food dimension of fisheries is also important given that hunger continues to plague about 1 billion people globally. Globally, fish contributes about 18 percent of animal protein intake, but in many developing countries fish contributes one-third or as much as half of animal protein. Small-scale fisheries provide the majority of fish for human consumption in developing countries. In considering the food dimension, the participants stressed the fact of the high nutritional value of fish (e.g. vitamins; micronutrients) and its affordability even though real fish prices show overall an increasing trend.

8. In reference to the large body of literature on poverty issues including the 2000 World Development Report, Mr Willmann mentioned that the nature of poverty is usually

associated with low income and consumption, low attainment levels in education, health and nutrition, high vulnerability, and powerlessness. Whilst there are many characteristics of poor households that are typical, there is no one established, and accepted, theory or conceptual framework that can explain the causes of poverty in all situations. However, evidence points to several interrelated and re-inforcing causes including (i) poor economic performance, (ii) weak asset base and landlessness or land-poor, (iii) political instability and conflict, (iv) poor and inadequate public service delivery, (v) income and gender inequality and (vi) erosion of traditional safety nets. Additional factors that could play a particular role in small-scale fisheries include (i) the high risk nature of fishing activities, (ii) the geographic remoteness of many communities, (iii) the frequent low socio-political status of the fishing occupation and fishing communities, (iv) unfavourable conditions for organizing (absence from home; remoteness; geographic spread), (v) insecure access to natural resources, especially fishery resources and land; and (vi) the proneness to depletion and dissipation of resource rents because of open or quasi-open access to fishery resources.

9. There were several issues to consider in the development of poverty reduction strategies in small-scale fisheries. A first question was how much more is needed to be known on the extent of poverty, the characteristics of the poor, and the causes of poverty in small-scale fisheries. While many countries have already undertaken poverty assessment studies, they usually did not specifically refer to fisheries. On the other hand, it could be assumed that many of the findings of these studies apply equally to fishing communities.

10. A second issue is whether national programmes for poverty reduction were reaching small-scale fishing communities, and if not why not, and what could be done about it. A related issue was whether fisheries-specific poverty reduction programmes should be led by fisheries departments or other ministries having a more comprehensive mandate such as rural development or economic planning.

11. In discussing these issues, participants agreed that more research would be desirable to obtain a better understanding of the extent to which the specific characteristics of small-scale fisheries contributed to higher or lower incidences of poverty than elsewhere in the economy and whether the dynamics and causes of poverty in fisheries were specifically influenced by aspects such as resource access conditions, coping and insurance mechanisms, and other factors.

OVERVIEW OF THE BENIN WORKSHOP ON SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES, POVERTY AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES, COTONOU, NOVEMBER 2001

12. Arthur Neiland reported on the proceedings and outcome of the Benin workshop whose objectives were to provide a general overview of poverty and poverty alleviation, to examine the relationship between poverty and fisheries management, to identify possible strategies for poverty alleviation, and to contribute to the work of the SFLP. The workshop considered what is, or why is there poverty in rural Africa, what is the relationship between fisheries and poverty, and how can poverty be alleviated. Each day there were key papers and discussion groups.

13. The key findings of the workshop were as follows:

- poverty in small-scale fishing communities is a multidimensional phenomenon and cannot be exclusively attributed to endogenous factors within the fisheries sector such as overfishing or excess fishing capacity;
- in comparison to rural agriculture and urban poverty, there are few detailed assessments of the nature, extent and causes of poverty in fishing communities in most countries of the region;
- policies for the alleviation of poverty in fishing communities need to be multifaceted and the SLA provides a good entry point to identifying the critical causes of poverty and measures to alleviate poverty;
- the better integration of the fisheries sector within national poverty reduction strategies is desirable;
- the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, properly adapted to the specific characteristics of West African fisheries, provides a good basis for addressing endogenous causes of poverty in fishing communities, and for enhancing the contribution of the fisheries sector to national poverty alleviation.

14. Further conclusions of the workshop included: (i) the methodology/diagnosis of poverty needs improving, although the SLA is helping; (ii) there is little real knowledge of the relative importance of the various asset types in the asset pentagon of the SLA; (iii) there is a high complexity of situations in many countries, which means that policy-makers have tended to focus on areas other than the problematic one of political reform in looking for solutions to poverty; these have included training and technology transfer to boost productivity of natural resource systems; (iv) there was a strong willingness among participants to improve understanding and poverty alleviation through incorporation of fisheries into PRSPs, cooperation and lesson learning; and (v) the SFLP is playing an important role in contributing to a better understanding of the causes of poverty.

THE POTENTIAL OF USING THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACHES IN POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES

15. This item was introduced by Foday Turay based on a presentation prepared jointly with Fabio Pittaluga. The preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) is an ongoing process and it was noted that the SLA can contribute to PRSPs in a number of ways. At the level of analysis and diagnosis of poverty, because the SLA is a people-focused approach to poverty assessment, it goes beyond classical analysis of poverty to highlight strengths and opportunities available. In terms of strategy formulation, the SLA recognizes that livelihoods are intrinsically multisectoral and that problems in one sector may have solutions in other sectors. It can also help with the identification and prioritization of entry points, and with sectoral dialogue and synergy.

16. The SLA may contribute to the decentralization process through an enhanced participation at all levels, and an improved ownership of strategies at all levels. It too can contribute to the monitoring and implementation aspects of PRSPs by providing a framework for results-based monitoring of livelihoods, the use of appropriate indicators, setting of targets, assessing impacts outside the realm of the entry point, and strengthening

the learning process which is intrinsic to the PRS process. In addition, the SLA as applied to fisheries can assist PRSPs because this approach:

- looks at more than just catch or production levels;
- helps with a recognition that fisheries supports more people than if you only consider production; this is important given that PRSPs attempt to identify key sectors which can contribute to economic growth;
- can help to identify opportunities for diversification to help with overexploitation of inland water bodies and marine fisheries;
- can help administrators understand that fishing communities have needs, problems and opportunities outside the sector;
- helps to strengthen the synergies between stakeholders at all levels;
- supplements money-metric assessments of poverty, and helps to explain the causality of poverty;
- enhances policy-makers' understanding of human and social capital for developing anti-poverty strategies;
- focuses on vulnerability to make analysis dynamic and flexible.

17. However, some important questions remain. Can a multisectoral approach function with heavily sectoralized budget allocations? Should/does the SLA improve the visibility of individual sectors?

THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

18. Benedict Satia introduced this agenda item by pointing out that the CCRF is a coherent set of principles, rules, ethics and standards that should be considered by nations and regional fishery organizations and arrangements, NGOs and industries as well as other stakeholders of the fisher sector in relation to the conservation, management and development of all fisheries on a sustainable basis. It was adopted by FAO members in October 1995 against a background of widespread international concern over the serious problems confronting fisheries and aquaculture around the world.

19. Constraints to the implementation of the CCRF include: (i) inadequate institutional and technical capacity; inadequate funding; (ii) a lack of information and inadequate access to information, including public education programmes, underutilization of the media, etc.; (iii) inadequate participation of all stakeholders; (iv) inappropriate legislative framework; (iv) the socio-economic implications of reducing fishing effort; and (v) the difficulties of implementing such concepts as the precautionary approach in the context of reduced human and financial resources in developing countries.

20. Some suggested solutions to better implementation include: the need for more educational outreach; the active involvement of stakeholders through the adoption of participatory approaches in fisheries management; the presentation of the Code at major national and international fishing and aquaculture industry events; emphasis on training and capacity building at all levels; improvement in the legislative framework by incorporating provisions of the Code; the translation of the Code in local languages, and the increased use of audiovisual aids.

21. A comparison of the SLA and the CCRF was summarized. It was stressed that there are differences and similarities in terms of goals, immediate objectives, principles, strategies and entry points. The SLA is generally wider in terms of aims and perspective, more bottom-up and non-specific to the fisheries sector. However, the Code is also concerned with poverty and livelihoods. The combined application of the SLA and the CCRF can be expected to result in a number of favourable outcomes and results.

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON EQUITY AND EFFICIENCY

22. Jean-Philippe Platteau provided a brief exposé of some theoretical considerations on the relationship between the level of resource exploitation, the resource access regime and outcomes in terms of efficiency and equity. Where open access conditions prevail fishery resources tend to become overexploited. The effect on equity and poverty was dependent, however, on whether the resources were overexploited in economic terms only (i.e. dissipation of resource rent because of excess capital employed in the fishery), or in both economic and biological terms (i.e. rent dissipation as well as a reduction in sustainable yield). While in open access situations, resource rents tend to become totally dissipated, in common property resource regimes, rents may only be partially dissipated, because some community control over resource access and capital investment applied.

23. Assuming that there is no biological overfishing, but rent dissipation, open access and community management would lead to a larger wage bill than under a private property regime (that would maximize resource rent). Thus, while this situation was economically inefficient, it could be beneficial for the poor because of a higher wage bill. In addition, insurance was better for the poor under open access or community management. These results derived from theoretical considerations would not hold in situations where open access or weakly or non-regulated common property regimes caused economic as well as (significant) biological overfishing.

24. Dr Platteau then considered the impacts of other factors on equity. Population growth would lead to a decline in average incomes, and a decline in the insurance function that both would be detrimental for the poor. The effect of market integration had the opposite effect (as long as real prices for fish increased as a result) i.e. higher incomes and better insurance. The effects of increased socio-economic differentiation in fishing communities would reduce the insurance benefit for the poor, because those with more boats could stabilize incomes at the expense of the poor, as access rights were usually apportioned by the number of boats (i.e. harvesting capacity) that people have, and not according to households. Finally, he noted that inequality in a community is not invariably bad for the poor, as the rich were more likely to push for the establishment of effective resource access controls that could be of benefit to the poor as well.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW PREPARED AS BACKGROUND TO THE MEETING

25. Graeme MacFadyen presented the findings of a literature review that he had prepared jointly with Emily Corcoran.[1] The reviewed covered eight main topics:

- the applied methodology and findings of studies to analyse poverty in fishing communities;
- a synthesis of the findings of lessons-learned studies on applying the SLA to fisheries and rural development;
- a synthesis of reviews of using the SLA in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers;
- the "commons" nature of fisheries: cause or remedy of poverty?
- the special characteristics of small-scale fishers' vulnerability and coping mechanisms;
- the impact of technological change on efficiency, equity and poverty;
- the role of fishworkers' organizations: a voice for the poor?
- the critical factors for artisanal/small-scale fishers to get out of poverty.

26. It is clear from the 300 or so references reviewed, that there are very few studies which examine the impacts of different issues on poverty in an empirical way, and which actually define and measure poverty. Furthermore, those that do, generally only measure changes in income. Much of the older literature refers to income [poverty], and not the broader concept of poverty as proposed in the SLA. As is now realized, poor people have many criteria of well-being and deprivation. Bangladesh, India and the Philippines are the countries that have been the focus of most work, along with a considerable body of literature on West Africa. There remains a rather theoretical focus of much of the work surrounding sustainable livelihoods.

27. The whole concept of poverty has been broadened in recent years. Recognising that it is multidimensional, dynamic and very complex radically affects how it is measured, what approaches are used to tackle it, and its determinants etc. A key realization is that simple sectoral approaches are unlikely to be successful. The broader concept of poverty means that it is very difficult and time-consuming to measure, define and understand the causes of poverty, but efforts to do so are essential if interventions and policy initiatives are to be successful. Poverty is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but varies between individuals, households and communities, over time, as well as according to people's definition of what poverty is. While poverty traps in fishing communities certainly exist, there is often rapid movement in and out of poverty within communities, as well as people becoming more or less poor. There is usually great differentiation of wealth within any particular group.

28. The study of poverty is very old and poverty alleviation has of course been realized in many contexts long before the SL approach was designed. Nevertheless, the overwhelming impression from the SL literature (perhaps understandably) is that SL approaches are an improvement on conventional sectoral efforts, facilitate the incorporation of inherent complexities, and are applicable in all sectors and with different groups of people in

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[1] FAO. In press. *Literature review of studies on poverty in fishing communities and of lessons learned in using the sustainable livelihoods approach in poverty alleviation strategies and projects*, by G. Macfadyen and E. Corcoran. FAO Fisheries Circular No. 979. Rome. 97 pp.

different countries, cultures and at different levels. However, the fact that the SLA is such a new approach to our understanding of poverty means that most of lessons learned are more to do with design and implementation of approaches and interventions, rather than with the results of such programmes in terms of factors to help people out of poverty, key determinants of poverty etc. An important outcome of the SL process is the stimulation of continual critical analysis, challenging ideas and practices that develop the debate. PRSPs have so far made little explicit reference to livelihoods in small-scale fisheries. While the SLA is thought to offer great potential to contribute to improving the relevance of PRSPs, there is some concern over the extent to which SL principles are currently incorporated in PRSPs.

29. Vulnerability seems to be at least as important as poverty, and while related, is distinct from poverty. Policy must focus on preventing people from falling into poverty as much as helping them to get out of it. Vulnerability appears to be increasing in small-scale fisheries, and lacks a well-developed theory and accepted indicators and methods of measurement. There do not appear to be many obvious generalizable findings in the literature about vulnerability and coping mechanisms.

30. While in the earlier fisheries economics literature, common property was often equated with open access, there prevails now a much better understanding of the need to clearly distinguish between different governance regimes including open access, unregulated common property (i.e. de facto open access), weakly to strongly regulated common property and private property regimes. The influence of a particular governance regime on poverty has received little specific attention in the fisheries literature, and what is available in the general literature on that topic relates to the possible trade-offs between efficiency and equity (see above paragraphs 22 to 24). Furthermore, it is important to consider the role of the State itself from which different governance structures are derived or endorsed. For example, what will be the State's policy with regard to matters of resource usage and wealth distribution, and how will a weak State implement the CCRF.

31. Technology has been shown to have had significant equity and poverty implications, both in terms of small-scale fishers loosing out to industrial vessels, but also within the small-scale fisheries sector through increasing debt to middlemen etc. and increased vulnerability. For technology to assist with poverty reduction (whether it be aquaculture, marketing or production technology), it must be "appropriate" and not "top-down"; this has too often failed to be the case. Some simple technology can have great benefits to the poor e.g. use of VHF radios for surveillance, safety etc. The poor are often not early adopters of technology due to their marginal circumstances and attitudes to risk, so programmes incorporating the use of technology must specifically assist the poor to ensure that the benefits do not accrue to the better off.

32. There are few empirical studies on the impacts of political fisher's organizations on poverty and the poor, even through they have certainly affected policy changes in a number of countries. Studies on economic organizations such as cooperatives, show that they are often of limited benefit, except where such organizations are locally based with a strong identification by fishers with the aims and motivations of the organizations concerned, good leadership and appropriate facilities.

33. The literature includes a huge range of factors that various authors view as being particularly important in getting small-scale fishers out of poverty. Few are backed up by hard empirical study, and those that are, focus almost exclusively on income poverty. It is not possible to prioritize between the various factors claimed as important for reducing poverty in small-scale fisheries, but control over access, reduced power of middlemen, sustainable exploitation, protection from industrial vessels, and alternative employment opportunities are perhaps the most widely supported.

34. A few research requirements and gaps thought to be of particular importance are:

- Research is urgently needed into the type and prevalence of poverty in fishing communities, and its main determinants. What is the relationship between assets, and how can changes in poverty be best assessed using the SLA? In addition, how does poverty in small-scale fisheries actually equate to poverty in other sectors?
- How can cross-sectoral responses be improved (e.g. health and fisheries)? And what are the means by which barriers (for example breaching sectoral limitations) to the adoption of the SLA at institutional level can be removed?
- Vulnerability, such a key factor in livelihoods, is very little understood in the fisheries sector. In addition, little is known as to how the vulnerability of fishers compares to those in other sectors, and between countries/regions, what are the main determinants and coping mechanisms, how has vulnerability changed over time, what are the most effective ways of reducing it, etc.?
- Research is needed on the contribution of common property resources to livelihood strategies, a better understanding of how access is negotiated and eroded (through power relations), and who depends most on them?
- A better understanding is required of the impacts of technology on the poor in more than just income terms. Which forms of technology are most pro-poor, and what are the attitudes of the poor to technology?
- If fisher organizations are to be supported through programme interventions, a much better understanding is required about the actual impacts of such organizations on the poor, on which types of organizations are likely to have the greatest benefit, and on which groups are excluded from particular organizations (i.e. are they the poorest of the poor?).

35. Although there are specificities of the fisheries sector that should of course be borne in mind in any research, given the broad scope of the SLA it should not be forgotten that the fisheries sector can learn a great deal from other fields of academic research as well as from more general models of development.

POVERTY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

36. Fabio Pittaluga provided a brief overview of various poverty assessment methods, looking at quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, spatial analysis, and mixed methods. Quantitative assessments usually establish criteria prior to analysis and can be either uni-dimensional (e.g. establishment of poverty line and head counts), or multidimensional (e.g. Unsatisfied Basic Needs Index, Human Development Index). Quantitative assessments are often based on large scale data collection efforts, and produce consistent data that allow for

comparison across countries. They provide a snapshot of poverty, are important for targeting and allocation of resources, although can be weak on the explanation of causality.

37. Qualitative assessments usually establish criteria during analysis and employ a multidimensional approach to poverty. They emphasize participation and local perceptions, and focus on causality but tend to be weaker on the enumeration of poor people. Frequently, they are based on selected representative samples, are often site specific and more difficult to compare across cases.

38. Spatial assessments are based on quantitative data and are important for targeting purposes. They often constitute a powerful tool for presenting data and for comparing different aspects of poverty.

39. In concluding, Mr Pittaluga remarked that, while the choice of a particular type of assessment methodology should ultimately be governed by the intended use of the information, factors that would have a bearing on the selection included (i) the concept and definition of poverty (e.g. normative/empirical, factual/potential, absolute/relative); (ii) the scale of analysis (household, community, district, etc.); (iii) budgetary constraints; (iv) the academic background of those involved; and (v) donor-driven preferences.

POVERTY MAPPING

40. Ergin Ataman reported on FAO's efforts, in collaboration with CG Centers and UNEP, to develop a global GIS database, the main aim of which is to create a global environmental database and a modelling/analysis infrastructure for assisting in the implementation and monitoring of the World Food Summit Plans of Action.

41. Poverty mapping can use one of two approaches. A bottom-up approach using socio-economic data aggregated at the subnational level such as survey and census data. Or, a top-down approach using satellite imagery, existing global environmental maps and GIS models. Some examples of maps already made were provided, including maps of rain-fed food production and potential yields/ha, electrical power consumption, road density, the distribution of GDP/km^2, nutrition levels, etc. It was noted in discussion, that many countries do not unfortunately keep data on GDP for fisheries separate from the agriculture sector.

42. One of the main problems in poverty mapping is to combine socio-economic data aggregated by administrative boundaries with environmental data based on natural boundaries. But despite these difficulties, combining the data is important, because environmental data such as agro-ecological zones, are often important in terms of food production (potential), market accessibility and vulnerability.

43. Detailed GIS maps can provide a powerful tool to inform about (likely) concentrations of poor and vulnerable people in relation to: agro-ecological zones, marginal or productive lands, major food crop and livestock production systems, market access, and livelihood systems. But problems with making such poverty maps include the large amount of data required, comparability of the information across regions and countries, and the difficulties of standardizing poverty criteria.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGIES

44. This agenda item was introduced by Jean-Philippe Platteau who referred to the conclusions of the Third Session of ACFR on this subject. These were presented by Dr Satia in his Opening Address and were considered by participants as a good starting point for the debate on this agenda item. They are reproduced below for convenience of the reader.

45. ACFR identified a number of issues to be considered for research, and noted that while major segments of small-scale and artisanal fisheries were believed to be poor there was, as yet, no precise definition of, or way to measure poverty in coastal fishing communities. In addition, it was noted that policies/programmes aimed at improving management might or might not extend to the impacts on poverty. The Committee concluded that the conceptual framework within which poverty is considered is of the utmost importance. It noted that (i) poverty is not a static condition and that individuals and households progress in and out of poverty; (ii) poverty can often not be usefully analysed separately from the public and social policies affecting development, and that it should not *a priori* be excluded that poverty originated not in spite of development efforts, but because of them; and (iii) in conducting studies of poverty in fishing communities it might be important to distinguish between the situation of marine (and large lake) fisheries and that of inland fisheries, as the two groups competed with different resource use groups. The Committee further suggested that empirical research on poverty in fishing communities could be divided into several areas of research. Among these would be:

- the importance of the institutional/governance setting for the origin and persistence of poverty;
- studies on processes/mechanisms that had permitted fishing communities to escape poverty and, equally important, of mechanisms that had caused fishing communities to become poor;
- studies of the potential impact of effort modulating fishery management schemes on poverty in fishing communities;
- studies on community organizations and customary management regimes, their importance for adequate use of community resources and consequent effects on poverty;
- studies comparing the economic and social rationale of industrial type fishing versus small-scale fisheries in situations where both were feasible;
- study of aquaculture as a mechanism for escaping poverty and studies on the scope of occupational opportunities outside the harvesting sector both within and outside the community.

46. Dr Platteau noted that for an increasing number of countries Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS) provide excellent data by household, and that the use of LSMS data in combination with census data might allow the application of poverty mapping techniques to measure poverty for small population groups such as fishing communities. The poverty mapping technique in combination with the conduct of a series of case studies that follow a common methodological framework to ensure comparability, provide powerful analytical tools to explain the causality of poverty by examining various factors that are likely to influence the incidence and depth of poverty. The case studies ought to focus on dynamic forces susceptible of affecting poverty, in particular:

- population growth;
- market integration (including the opening of export outlets);
- emergence or disappearance of alternative income opportunities outside the fishing sector;
- increasing socio-economic differentiation due to differential abilities of actors to respond to new economic opportunities because of differential access to credit, subsidies, and political decision-makers.

47. To the extent that the impact of such factors on both poverty and vulnerability is predicted by economic theory to differ according to whether fishermen operate under open access conditions, unregulated common property (membership rules exist but no rules regarding the use of the resource), regulated common property (both types of rules exist), or private property regime, the prevailing governance structure ought to be explicitly brought into the picture, as was concluded by ACFR. Moreover, the very impact of the above dynamic factors on the governance structure should be taken into account, making for a rather complex causal structure with feedback effects (see above paragraph 30).

48. The existence or absence of barriers to entry or exit opportunities must also be considered with a view to assessing whether the fishing sector is tightly related to other sectors of the economy (with the consequence that poverty of fishers and fishing communities should reflect poverty in the rest of the rural economy) or whether it is rather isolated as a result of political marginalization or social discrimination. This aspect of the problem is closely related to that of alternative income opportunities.

49. As far as possible, case studies should take the form of collecting complementary, poverty– and livelihoods-focused data in sites on which in-depth research (including analysis of historical processes and institutional mechanisms) has already been done and has shown promising results from the viewpoint of the effects of the aforementioned factors.

MAIN OUTCOMES AND FINDINGS OF THE WORKING PARTY

DEVELOPMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

50. While noting that at the current time it was premature to seek an amendment of the CCRF to better incorporate poverty alleviation aspects, the meeting agreed that it would be desirable to develop appropriate guidance material on this subject (or more specifically a publication in the technical guidelines series of the CCRF). Various issues should be addressed and covered in this material from a poverty eradication/alleviation angle including:

- greater awareness of the importance of small-scale fisheries in sustainable livelihoods;
- strengthened collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders in small-scale fisheries;
- adoption of an integrated approach to river and basin use;
- greater involvement of fishers in policy and decision-making processes;

- increased use of traditional knowledge and traditional frameworks in small-scale fisheries;
- improved post-harvest practices and increased utilization of small-scale fishery products;
- better recognition of gender differences;
- elaboration of conservation and management plans for river and lake basins, as well as coastal fisheries;
- better marketing/trade on favourable terms for small-scale fisheries;
- increased bilateral and international cooperation for inland water systems and coastal fisheries;
- improved guidance to obtain better information;
- attention to poverty in semi-industrial and industrial fisheries, as well on small-scale fisheries;
- a reduction in poverty must crucially tackle the rights of poor, small-scale fisheries.

BETTER INTEGRATION OF FISHERIES INTO PRSPs

51. There is an urgent need for a better diagnosis of the role of the fisheries sector in poverty reduction. But those in the fisheries sector must have a greater participatory role in the development of PRSPs if fisheries issues are to be taken on board adequately. Problems with PRSPs include: (i) they are linked to macroeconomic factors of debt reduction, and not specifically to fisheries; (ii) they are sometimes motivated more by a desire to fulfil the requirements of the IMF and World Bank rather than by serious attempts to understand poverty; (iii) the level of participation and the process itself is very much determined by which ministries are involved and funded; and (iv) the level of geographical detail and subsequent targeting can omit the poorest of the poor.

52. Some important questions remain about the potential of the SLA to contribute to the process of developing PRSPs. Firstly, if the SLA is to be married to PRSPs, both approaches must be known to those involved in policy-making. At the moment, PRSPs seem to be better known to policy-makers than the SLA. Secondly, can PRSPs incorporate the detail obtained through SLA, and does the SLA provide appropriate information to inform strategies in PRSPs? Thirdly, are other sectors using SLA? Fourthly, to what extent do those involved with developing PRSPs really have the power and influence to change national policy? And finally, do the IMF and World Bank require the SLA to be used as part of the PRS process, and should they, given that the SLA is just one of a number of approaches?

53. Given that sustainable livelihoods are not sector specific and governance divided among various ministries, there is a problem of raising the profile of "rural development" sectors more generally in PRSPs. It was suggested that it might be useful to have a brainstorming session in-house at FAO by fisheries staff with staff in other divisions e.g. forestry, agriculture etc. on this aspect.

54. A focus on PRSPs should not divert attention away from the importance of other types of poverty alleviation strategies. Furthermore, in focusing on poverty in small-scale fisheries, and identifying fishing communities, it must be remembered that fishing plays a role in the livelihood strategies of many people not traditionally thought of as living in

fishing communities, or thought of as fishers. If PRSPs are to assist poor fishers, care must therefore be taken not just to focus on the "fisheries" sector.

POVERTY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

55. Poverty assessments must take into account the importance of timing and seasonality. There is great need to remain vigilant about biases in poverty assessment methodologies. It was noted that quantitative assessment methodologies must be supported by qualitative ones, and that national level data that already exist (LSMS and census data) could provide great value when backed up by case studies. However, the availability of appropriate capacity for use in poverty assessments can be a serious constraint.

56. Political factors, power relations and physical infrastructure may be more important than the status of the resource base in determining poverty. There is great need for exploration into the relevant importance of different assets, acknowledging that there may be no perfect shape of the SL asset pentagon. Indeed measuring capital assets is very difficult and rather subjective, and questions remain about the extent to which the pentagon can be used to measuring poverty. Governance issues are fundamental to the factors that influence, create and prevent poverty. International factors and processes have great influence on the extent of good governance.

57. There was lively debate about the relative contributions of economics versus other disciplines. It was noted that income indicators of poverty are often highly correlated with composite indicators of poverty, but that the processes which contribute to poverty are much wider than just economic ones. It was also agreed that the diagnosis of income is not enough on which to base programme interventions. Participatory research to explore poverty issues is very important, and it was stressed that it should be checked and validated through appropriate techniques such as triangulation.

RESEARCH GAPS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

58. There was agreement on the urgent need of research to obtain a better understanding of the manifestations and extent of poverty in fishing communities and on the causal factors of the dynamics of poverty. There was also agreement on the need of research of the factors that influence the contribution of fisheries and aquatic resources to sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction in especially rural areas. The ACFR conclusions and the literature review provide valuable guidance on research priorities. Participants agreed to make submissions and suggestions on both the process of prioritization and prioritization itself

59. The research framework and methodologies need to be tailored to the intended use of the information. Research aimed directly at informing local-level support of sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction has to be tailored to the specific situational context and should help in empowering the target groups in decision-making. On the other side, research aimed at measuring the comparative extent of poverty in small-scale fishing communities with other communities and occupational groups has to apply standardized definitions and assessment methods to ensure comparability. Similarly, the analysis of causal factors of the dynamics of poverty can rely to a larger extent on qualitative data for informing local-level poverty reduction strategies and actions than analyses that aim at generating generalizable findings on, for example, the influence of different types of

governance structures on poverty in fishing communities. The cross-sectional and panel (i.e. time series) data analyses needed in the latter case have to be based on the use of a common methodological framework and comparable definitions and data collection procedures and usually require econometric techniques. There was agreement that both areas of research were complementary, and were needed to inform strategies and policies in support of sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction.

60. Regarding the research to be undertaken specifically within the framework of the normative component of the SFLP, the participants agreed with the approach outlined in above paragraphs 46 to 49 and noted the complementary of the SLA and more conventional poverty analyses. Participants agreed on a series of issues that should receive attention in the selection and conduct of case studies as further indicated below.

61. There is an important gap in knowledge regarding the actual contribution of fish to human nutrition, and changes over time. Poverty and food security are closely linked. There have certainly been significant changes in food availability as a result of overfishing and changes in the species composition of the catch (i.e. fishing down the food chain), rapidly increasing fish exports by developing countries, and foreign fishing under licensing agreements. The impact of these developments on fishing and other communities and especially on the incident of poverty is not well researched but likely dependent, inter alia, on wider macro-economic policies. There is a need to try to identify win-win situations (i.e. pro poor and pro economic growth), although it is acknowledged that there may have to be trade-offs and losers.

62. There is a research gap of the factors causing institutional dysfunctioning on one side, and successful policy coordination on the other side, and an urgent need for more policy research and institutional analysis to identify why these failures (and successes) occur and what remedial action can be taken

63. There is also the need to examine how good local knowledge systems are (e.g. for assessing fish stock abundance), the factors that cause them to erode or disappear, and how they could be rejuvenated and strengthened by, for example, facilitating the combining of traditional and modern knowledge systems.

64. It was suggested that while a multidimensional understanding of poverty is essential, poverty alleviation strategies must be focused. It was widely agreed by participants that there is a dearth of literature dealing with dynamic processes and change. Given the lack of empirical studies on poverty, the question was also raised as to whether fisheries research can learn from other sectors e.g. forestry. It was suggested that researchers should consider the subprogrammes of the FAO-DFID livelihood support programme which are dealing with other sectors. It was also agreed that there is a need to identify specificity to fisheries, as well as commonalty with other sectors, as commonalties between sectors may be able to be tackled more easily by national, cross-sectoral policies.

65. It was suggested to revisit and possibly re-analyse past socio-economic studies (and data) to create baseline information for assessments of changes over time. There was agreement that case studies to be initiated within the normative project should build upon earlier research studies. Noting that many such studies have not focused on poverty, participants stressed the need for ensuring comparability of results.

66. The meeting also considered the need for effective tools to disseminate research findings of project/case study results, particularly given that written guidelines and technical reports are more useful to some than to others. It was agreed that key issues that need to be addressed are a) accessibility to the literature, and b) the dynamic nature of the debate on poverty. It was proposed that consideration should be given to guidelines for outputs that might include CD ROMS and web-based outputs to facilitate the ongoing debate, and noted that this would facilitate collaborative input by other projects and interest groups.

PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

67. The main outcomes and findings of the meeting were discussed on the last day of the meeting (12 April 2002) based on a draft circulated among all present. This draft did not incorporate the conclusions of the morning session of the same day. The draft final report, therefore, was circulated by the meeting secretariat to all participants on 20 April 2002 for their comments and proposed amendments. Comments received by 24 May 2002 have been incorporated in the final report at the discretion of the secretariat. The report has not been formally adopted by participants.

APPENDIX A: Agenda

Wednesday, 10 April 2002

Chair: Neil MacPherson

09.30 Introduction (objectives and expected outcome)

10.00 Poverty in small-scale fisheries – an overview of issues

14.00 Findings of the SFLP Workshop on Small-Scale Fisheries, Poverty and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

16.00 The potential of using the Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches in Poverty Reduction Strategies

Thursday, 11 April 2002

Chair: Arthur Neiland

09.30 The potential role of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in poverty alleviation

11.00 Critical knowledge gaps and research needs:

1) The "commons" nature of fisheries: cause or remedy of poverty?
2) The special characteristics of small-scale fisher's vulnerability and coping mechanisms
3) The impact of technological change on efficiency, equity and poverty – does it matter whether fishing rights exist?
4) The role of fishworkers' organizations: a voice for the poor
5) The critical factors for artisanal/small-scale fishers to get out of poverty: evidences and inferences

14.00 Critical knowledge gaps and research needs (continued)

Friday, 12 April 2002

Chair: Foday Turay

09.30 Project framework and research methodologies:

1) Development of Code of Conduct Guidelines on poverty alleviation
2) Better integration of fisheries into PRSPs
3) Poverty assessment methodologies
4) Research methods to address the critical knowledge gaps

14.00 Adoption of summary of findings and recommendations

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APPENDIX C: List of Documents

1. Excerpt of the Report of the Third Session of the ACFR, Rome, 5–8 December 2000.

2. Fisheries and Poverty: Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation. Project Concept Paper.

3. Literature Review of Studies on Poverty in Fishing Communities and of Lessons Learned in Using the SLA in Poverty Alleviation Strategies and Projects (Fisheries and Rural Development). Draft Report prepared by Graeme Macfadyen (Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management) and Emily Corcoran (freelance consultant) (published as *FAO Fisheries Circular No. 979).*

4. Small-scale fisheries, poverty and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. An international workshop organized by CEMARE as part of the DFID/FAO Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP), Cotonou, Benin, November 2001 (edited by A.E. Neiland and C. Bene).

5. Communication by Peter Lanjouw, Development Research Group, World Bank, to Jean-Philippe Platteau, on the potential of applying poverty mapping techniques to fishing communities.

6. Progress and problems of artisanal fishermen in the Asia-Pacific region. In, Report of the 5th Government Consultation for the Asia and Pacific Region on the Follow-up to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Bangkok, Thailand, 24–27 February 1987. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. RAPA Report 1987/7.

7. Where are the women in fisheries? ICLARM news release.

8. Poverty of fishing communities: a thought. Communication by John Kurien, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India.

9. Campbell, J.; Salagrama, V. 2001. New approaches to participation in fisheries research (*FAO Fisheries Circular* No. 965).

10. Cunningham S. 2001. Towards the increased policy relevance of fisheries research: (*FAO Fisheries Circular* No. 964).

This report presents a summary of the presentations and discussions of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) and Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) Joint Working Party on Poverty in Small-Scale Fisheries – Promoting the Contribution of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Poverty Alleviation. The objectives of the meeting were to: (i) share experience and knowledge on this subject; (ii) identify clearly how the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries could serve as a tool in poverty alleviation in fishing communities; (iii) identify critical knowledge gaps and research needs; and (iv) elaborate a project framework and research methodologies. The meeting benefited from earlier discussions of this subject matter at the third session of the ACFR, December 2000, and the Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE) SFLP/FAO Cotonou Workshop, November 2001, and the background papers prepared for them.

The meeting agreed on the urgent need to obtain a better understanding of the manifestations and extent of poverty in fishing communities and on the causal factors of the dynamics of poverty. It recommended the development of appropriate guidance material on poverty assessment and poverty alleviation measures in small-scale fisheries, including the application of the SLA and the potential contribution of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

ISBN 92-5-104794-4 ISSN 0429-9337

9 789251 047941

TR/M/Y3910E/1/7.02/1200